

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) An expandable intragastric balloon designed to be implanted in the stomach of a patient for the treatment of obesity, comprising:

(a) an outer casing that is sufficiently flexible to pass from a reduced-volume configuration to an expanded configuration, thereby imparting the balloon with its functional shape, and:

(b) means for forming the outer casing, which are structurally integrated into the balloon and ~~primarily-substantially separate and independent~~ from the outer casing, said forming means being capable of being actuated, once the balloon has been implanted, on the one hand, in order to exert a sufficient driving pressure on the outer casing to force it to deploy and, on the other hand, to occupy a sufficient volume inside said outer casing to ensure the deployment of the outer casing from its reduced-volume configuration to its expanded configuration.

2. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 1, wherein the forming means comprises an inflation chamber, which is different from the outer casing and which is arranged inside thereof so as to ensure its formation by the introduction of an inflating fluid into said inflation chamber.

3. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber and the outer casing are shaped such that, when the inflation chamber occupies its expanded position, the outer casing substantially matches the shape of said inflation chamber.

4. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber comprises an inner pouch that is sufficiently flexible to pass from a reduced-volume position to an expanded position.
5. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 4, wherein the inner pouch comprises an elastomer material.
6. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 4, wherein the inner pouch is defined by a wall including at least one shield that is substantially impervious to gases.
7. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 6, wherein the shield comprises at least one polymer having a gas barrier effect.
8. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 7, wherein the shield comprises one or more thermoplastic polymers having a gas barrier effect.
9. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 8, wherein the shield comprises one or more polymers selected from the group of polymers consisting of ethylene vinyl alcohol (EVOH), poly(vinylidene chloride) (PVDC), polyacrylonitrile (PAN), polyamide (PA), bi-oriented polyamide, poly(ethylene terephthalate) (PET), bi-oriented poly(ethylene terephthalate), and thermoplastic elastomer polyurethane.
10. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 4, wherein the inner pouch comprises at least one thermoplastic elastomer polyurethane film.
11. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of the Claim 1, wherein the outer casing comprises a bio-compatible material.
12. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 1, wherein the outer casing comprises an elastomer material.

13. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 12, wherein the outer casing is made of silicone.
14. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 13, wherein the silicone is colored white by treating with barium sulfate.
15. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 1, wherein the outer casing is covered with parylene.
16. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflating fluid is a gas.
17. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber is designed to have a substantially spherical shape in its expanded position.
18. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber and the outer casing are substantially movable in relation to each other.
19. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber and the outer casing are substantially concentric.
20. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 2, wherein the inflation chamber is covered with parylene.
21. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 3, wherein the inflation chamber comprises an inner pouch that is sufficiently flexible to pass from a reduced-volume position to an expanded position.
22. (previously presented) The intragastric balloon of Claim 5, wherein the inner pouch is defined by a wall including at least one shield that is substantially impervious to gases.

23. (new) An expandable intragastric balloon designed to be implanted in the stomach of a patient for the treatment of obesity, comprising:

(a) an outer casing forming a volume that is sufficiently flexible to change from a reduced-volume configuration to an expanded-volume configuration; and

(b) an inner pouch forming an inflation chamber and structurally integrated substantially within the outer casing and substantially separate and independent from the outer casing,

whereby after implantation the inner pouch can be actuated from a reduced-volume configuration to a expanded-volume configuration and provide sufficient driving pressure on the outer casing to force the outer casing to deploy into the expanded-volume configuration.

24. (new) An expandable intragastric balloon designed to be implanted in the stomach of a patient for the treatment of obesity, comprising:

(a) an outer casing forming a first inflatable chamber having a volume that is sufficiently flexible to change from a reduced-volume configuration to an expanded-volume configuration;

(b) an inner pouch forming a second inflatable chamber and disposed substantially within the first inflatable chamber and substantially separate and independent from the outer casing; and,

(c) a valve associated with the outer casing and the inner pouch for conducting either fluid or gas from a supply source external to the balloon into the second inflatable chamber,

whereby after implantation the inner pouch can be expanded by being at least partially filled with fluid or gas from a reduced-volume configuration to an expanded-volume configuration and provide sufficient driving pressure on the outer casing to urge the outer casing to deploy into the expanded-volume configuration.